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Further, they said that the body would be pierced and that none of the bones would be broken, contrary to customary procedure in cases of crucifixion (Psalm 22 & 34:20; Zechariah 12:10). **(Probability of chance fulfillment = 1 in 10¹³.)**

(5) The prophet Isaiah foretold that a conqueror named Cyrus would destroy seemingly impregnable Babylon and subdue Egypt along with most of the rest of the known world. This same man, said Isaiah, would decide to let the Jewish exiles in his territory go free without any payment of ransom (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1; and 45:13). Isaiah made this prophecy 150 years before Cyrus was born, 180 years before Cyrus performed any of these feats (and he did, eventually, perform them all), and 80 years before the Jews were taken into exile. **(Probability of chance fulfillment = 1 in 10¹⁵.)**

(6) Joshua prophesied that Jericho would be rebuilt by one man. He also said that the man's eldest son would die when the reconstruction began and that his youngest son would die when the work reached completion (Joshua 6:26). About five centuries later this prophecy found its fulfillment in the life and family of a man named Hiel (1 Kings 16:33-34). **(Probability of chance fulfillment = 1 in 10⁷.)**

(7) The day of Elijah's supernatural departure from Earth was predicted unanimously—and accurately, according to the eye-witness account—by a group of fifty prophets (2 Kings 2:3-11). **(Probability of chance fulfillment = 1 in 10⁹.)**

(8) Jahaziel prophesied that King Jehoshaphat and a tiny band of men would defeat an enormous, well-equipped, well-trained army without even having to fight. Just as predicted, the King and his troops stood looking on as their foes were supernaturally destroyed to the last man (2 Chronicles 20). **(Probability of chance fulfillment = 1 in 10⁸.)**

(9) One prophet of God (unnamed) said that a future king of Judah, named Josiah, would take the bones of all the occultic priests (priests of the "high places") of Israel's King Jeroboam and burn them on Jeroboam's altar (1 Kings 13:2 and 2 Kings 23:15-18). This event occurred approximately 300 years after it was foretold. **(Probability of chance fulfillment = 1 in 10¹³.)**

Since these prophecies cover mostly separate and independent events, the probability of chance occurrence for the prophecies stated above alone is about 1 in 10⁸⁶. For the sake of putting the figure into perspective, this probability can be compared to the statistical chance that the second law of thermodynamics will be reversed in a given situation (for example, that a gasoline engine will refrigerate itself during its combustion cycle or that heat will flow from a cold body to a hot body)—that chance = 1 in 10⁸⁰. Stating it simply, based on these prophecies alone, the Bible record may be said to be vastly more reliable than the second law of thermodynamics. Each reader should feel free to make his own reasonable estimates of probability for the chance fulfillment of the prophecies cited here. In any case, the probabilities deduced still will be absurdly remote.

Dr. Hugh Ross (edited). Fullfilled Prophecies: Evidence for the Reliability of the Bible 2003



St. George & St. Shenouda Coptic Orthodox Church Bulletin

Feb 2013

St. Athanasius On Theophany

If then for our sake He sanctifies Himself, and does this when He is become man, it is very plain that the Spirit's descent on Him in Jordan was a descent upon us, because of His bearing our body. And it did not take place for promotion to the Word, but again for our sanctification, that we might share His anointing, and of us it might be said, 'Know ye not that ye are God's Temple, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?' (1 Corinthians 3:16) For when the Lord, as man, was washed in Jordan, it was we who were washed in Him and by Him. And when He received the Spirit, it was we who by Him were made recipients of It. And moreover for this reason, not as Aaron or David or the rest, was He anointed with oil, but in another way above all His fellows, 'with the oil of gladness,' which He Himself interprets to be the Spirit, saying by the Prophet, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because the Lord hath anointed Me;' (Isaiah 61.1) as also the Apostle has said, 'How God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit.' (Acts 10:38) When then were these things spoken of Him but when He came in the flesh and was baptized in Jordan, and the Spirit descended on Him?



And indeed the Lord Himself said, 'The Spirit shall take of Mine;' and 'I will send Him;' and to His disciples, 'Receive ye the Holy Spirit.'(John 16:14) And notwithstanding, He who, as the Word and Radiance of the Father, gives to others, now is said to be sanctified, because now He has become man, and the Body that is sanctified is His. From Him then we have begun to receive the unction and the seal, John saying, 'And ye have an unction from the Holy One;' and the Apostle, 'And ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise' (1 John 2:20; Ephesians 1:13).

RELIABILITY OF THE BIBLE

Unique among all books ever written, the Bible accurately foretells specific *detailed* events many years, sometimes centuries, before they occur. Approximately 2500 prophecies appear in the pages of the Bible, about 2000 of which already have been fulfilled to the letter — no errors.

Since the probability for any one of these prophecies having been fulfilled by chance averages less than one in ten (figured very conservatively) and since the prophecies are for the most part independent of one another, the odds for all these prophecies having been fulfilled by chance without error is less than one in 10^{2000} (that is 1 with 2000 zeros written after it)! Let us consider a few:

(1) After Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians, the prophet Daniel prophesied that Jerusalem would be rebuilt, that the Messiah would come while the city stood, that the Messiah would die, and that after his death Jerusalem would once again be destroyed, that all prophets will stop prophesying, and that all sacrifices would cease. He made this prophecy some time before 500 B.C. (**Probability of chance fulfillment = 1 in 10^5 .**)

(2) In approximately 700 B.C. the prophet Micah named the tiny village of Bethlehem as the birthplace of Israel's Messiah (Micah 5:2). The fulfillment of this prophecy in the birth of Christ is one of the most widely known and widely celebrated facts in history. (**Probability of chance fulfillment = 1 in 10^5 .**)

(3) In the fifth century B.C. a prophet named Zechariah declared that the Messiah would be betrayed for the price of a slave—thirty pieces of silver, according to Jewish law, and also that this money would be used to buy a burial ground for Jerusalem's poor foreigners (Zechariah 11:12-13). (**Probability of chance fulfillment = 1 in 10^{11} .**)

(4) Some 400 years before crucifixion was invented, both Israel's King David and the prophet Zechariah described the Messiah's death in words that perfectly depict that mode of execution. . .

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Book Review

God and You: Person to Person: Developing a Daily Personal Relationship with Jesus

Fr. Anthony M. Coniaris

ISBN-10: 1880971119

"God and you person to person: Developing a Daily Personal Relationship with Jesus" evokes in the reader a desire to delve deeper in their relationship with Christ so as to know Him *personally*. In this powerful book, Father Anthony Coniaris helps the reader understand just how personal God can, and more importantly, should be to every Orthodox Christian. In the fourteen chapters, Coniaris takes the reader on a journey through each part of a Christian's life, allowing him to appreciate how all of these dimensions are a personal encounter and experience with the Living God. Throughout the book, Coniaris weaves together many inspiring church father excerpts with amusing anecdotes to make a strong appeal to the reader the importance of *knowing* God. By the end of the book, the reader has a very clear sense of how every aspect of living his/her faith through the Church is personal, yet never independent. After emphasizing how each Christian must personally know God, Coniaris then skillfully explains how this personal relationship of each believer relates to their Sacramental life in the Church. This book is an easy, quick read that by the end truly motivates its reader to enter and experience a personal relationship with the Risen Christ, as Saint Paul exclaims "I Know whom I have believed"(2nd Timothy 1:12).

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